United Nations S/2002/553

Security Council

Distr.: General
20 May 2002
English
Original: French

Letter dated 17 May 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to my letter dated 16 May 2002 (S/2002/548), in which I informed you of the situation created by the clashes between the Rwandan Patriotic Army and troops of the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD/Goma) on Tuesday, 14 May 2002, in Kisangani, capital of Orientale province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in order to draw the attention of the Security Council to the terrible events taking place in Kisangani.

According to international media and religious sources, Rwandan Patriotic Army reinforcements brought into Kisangani in a series of airlifts have undertaken the violent repression of civil society and religious groups, accused of advocating revolt when in fact they were preparing a peace symposium at the initiative of Monsignor Monsengwo, Archbishop of Kisangani. According to credible sources, troops led by Laurent Kunde, Commander of the Seventh Brigade, are massacring civilians; already, over 200 people are reported dead, their bodies dumped in the river. Two foreign Jesuits, a Belgian, Guy Verhaegen, and a Spaniard, Zabalo, have been beaten and mistreated. Access to the two Kisangani airports is still barred.

My Government has also learned from a number of human rights organizations in Orientale province that some 20 Congolese officers of RCD/Goma were arrested on Wednesday evening and summarily executed on Thursday by the Rwandan Patriotic Army reinforcements sent to Kisangani.

According to the same sources, the Rwandan Patriotic Army has also arrested and executed a number of police officers, all of them of Congolese nationality, in the course of these reprisals since the mutiny. It was also observed that on Thursday afternoon all the Congolese officers of RCD/Goma were disarmed and sent to Kigali.

To all appearances, Rwanda and its branch within RCD/Goma are cynically executing a plan of provocation and reprisals that was put in place in advance.

The atrocities committed by the Rwandan Patriotic Army in Kisangani are like those endured daily by Congolese families in Bukavu, Uvira and Kindu and the Sankuru area, where it is terrorizing those active in civil society.

In Kisangani, the press is being used to intimidate the public. According to the testimony of humanitarian workers and observers of the United Nations

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Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), the RCD/Goma authorities are threatening leaders of civil society by name in a message read on local radio and television.

My Government calls upon the Security Council to dispatch a commission of inquiry to Kisangani as a matter of urgency to determine the truth of the facts alleged against the Rwandan Patriotic Army.

If these facts are confirmed, my Government, which reminds the Security Council that these macabre acts by the Rwandan Patriotic Army are similar to those that lead the Council to adopt resolution 1304 (2000) of 16 June 2000, will be entitled to demand that the Council take enforcement action against Rwanda, as provided for in the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

My Government also notes that these very grave events are occurring as a result of Rwanda's refusal to comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions demanding the demilitarization of the city of Kisangani. They also prove that, unlike Uganda, Rwanda never withdrew from Kisangani and its environs as required by Security Council resolution 1304 (2000). My Government feels that it is the responsibility of the Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, to secure the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Rwanda not just from Kisangani and its environs but from the entire territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Lastly, to ensure that the Congolese people do not feel abandoned, terrorized and oppressed, the mandate of MONUC must be expanded to include their protection. It would be incomprehensible if the international community were to look on with indifference at the deliberate genocide of over 4 million Congolese and to persist in talking only about the security of Rwanda, the country that is at the root of all the evils that have beset the Great Lakes region for the past decade and more.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ileka **Atoki**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative